

Moscow expels U.S. diplomat

MOSCOW (AP) — The Soviet Union has ordered a U.S. embassy defence attaché to leave the country after catching him in a "major espionage action," the official news agency TASS said Wednesday. Embassy spokesman Jaroslav Verner said the diplomat, Erik Sites, left Saturday. He declined comment on the charges made by TASS in a report attributed to the KGB secret police. It was the second time an American diplomat was ordered out of the country this year. In March, the Soviets expelled Michael Sellers, an embassy second secretary. Asked if Mr. Sites held a military rank, Verner said, "I don't have that." He said Mr. Sites was a member of the staff of the defence attaché's office but declined to say how long he had been in Moscow. "A member of the military attaché's office in the American embassy in Moscow, Erik Sites, was detained while conducting a conspiratorial meeting with a Soviet citizen enlisted by American intelligence."

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World figures reject 'Star Wars'

WASHINGTON (R) — Scores of prominent figures in the United States, Canada and Europe on Wednesday released an appeal to world governments to oppose space militarisation programmes such as President Reagan's "Star Wars" concept. The appeal, published simultaneously in North American and European capitals, said space weapons were more likely to start a nuclear war than prevent one. "We urge all governments to abandon and actively oppose all space- or ground-based programmes for weapons in outer space to maintain, strengthen and strictly observe existing arms control agreements and to negotiate a ban on anti-satellite weapons, including the withdrawal of existing systems," they said. "Existing or proposed space weapons are ill-conceived and dangerous, more apt to lead to nuclear war than to prevent it," they added.

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Jordan to take part in Seoul Olympics

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan will take part in the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul, South Korea, with a 50-member team of players and officials, according to a Cabinet statement issued on Wednesday. The Cabinet statement also said that Ali Al Qudah and Aref Rashid Marshoud have been appointed governors at the Ministry of Interior. Another announcement in Amman on Wednesday said that Jordan will take part in a conference by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in Vienna on May 22. The Jordanian delegation will include by the under-secretary of the Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs and Jordan's permanent representative at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva.

British volunteer found dead in Israel

TEL AVIV (AP) — A British woman who worked as a volunteer on a southern settlement was found dead Wednesday, an Israeli police spokesman reported. Police said the victim was 23-year-old Lucy Amos of Kingstone-on-Thames. The woman died of strangulation, police said. The autopsy has yet to determine whether she was raped. Amos was working at the Ein Yahav communal settlement 120 kilometres southeast of Tel Aviv.

Shara'a in S. Arabia after Tehran visit

TAIF (R) — Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Shara'a arrived in Taif on Wednesday, and diplomatic sources in the region said he might be carrying an Iranian response to a Saudi warning over attacks on Gulf shipping. Mr. Shara'a visited Tehran on Tuesday and was believed to have carried a Saudi message expressing the kingdom's concern over attacks, apparently by Iranian aircraft, on two Saudi tankers in the southern Gulf this month. The sources said Mr. Shara'a might also discuss fears of renewed conflict between Syria and Israel.

Gandhi begins African tour

LUSAKA, Zambia (AP) — Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi arrived here on Wednesday on the start of a trip to four southern African nations that is expected to focus on the region's political and military conflicts. President Kenneth Kaunda and Prime Minister Kebby Musokwane were among the thousands of Zambians who greeted Mr. Gandhi at Lusaka international airport. A 21-gun salute was fired as the Indian leader's plane touched down.

31 killed in S. African accident

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — A bus carrying 176 schoolchildren overturned, killing 31 youths and injuring the rest, authorities in the South African homeland of Transkei said Wednesday. The accident Tuesday night was the second bus disaster in the black homeland in two days.

INSIDE

Lebanese rightists prepare new peace plan, page 2
Government statement draws attention to Israeli terrorism, page 3
Mideast promises bright future despite gloomy situation, page 4
When Ezvo Biangi asks questions, Italians respond, page 5
Boston Celtics prove they are the best every night, page 6
Saudi pressure EC, retain ban on produce, page 7
Strategic study highlights conflicts in Asia and Mideast, page 8

Gorbachev, lamenting Chernobyl accident, extends moratorium

MOSCOW (R) — Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev said on Wednesday the Chernobyl disaster had shown humanity for the first time atomic energy out of control and announced Moscow would extend its nuclear test freeze until Aug. 6.

In an address on state television, Mr. Gorbachev said: "A misfortune has befallen us — the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant."

"For the first time ever we encountered in reality such a sinister force as nuclear energy that has escaped control..."

Mr. Gorbachev said seven people had died from radiation and 299 people were still in hospital. "It is early yet to pass final judgment on the causes of the accident," Mr. Gorbachev said.

Mr. Gorbachev said the Chernobyl disaster "showed again what an abyss will open if nuclear war befalls mankind..."

"In conditions when the attention to nuclear matters increased, the Soviet government... has decided to extend its unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests till Aug. 6 this year," he said.

Moscow froze nuclear testing last August but suspended the halt two months ago after the United States ignored its call to join in a ban.

Mr. Gorbachev, making his first public comment on the April 26 disaster, also renewed a call to President Ronald Reagan to meet him in Europe to discuss a test ban.

As an alternative venue Mr. Gorbachev suggested Hiroshima, the Japanese city where the first atomic bomb was dropped on Aug. 6, 1945, near the end of World War II.

He denied that the Soviet Union had been late in telling the world of the disaster, reported 48 hours after it took place, and proposed a new mechanism for exchanging information on nuclear accidents.

He also suggested "creating an international regime of safe development of nuclear power on the basis of close cooperation of all nations dealing with nuclear power engineering."

"A system of prompt warning and supply of information in the event of accidents and faults at nuclear power stations... should be established in the framework of this regime," he said.

Mr. Gorbachev, who spoke for 25 minutes, said measures taken immediately after the accident had "failed to protect many people."

His statement that 299 were in hospital raised the figure of hospital cases from 209. His remark that "seven of them have died" appeared to raise the death toll to nine. Two died in the initial accident.

Mr. Gorbachev said the Kremlin had acted "as soon as we received reliable initial information" and he praised rescue workers.

The radiation in the area around Chernobyl, from which 92,000 people were evacuated, remained dangerous, though the problem at the crippled reactor had been quelled, he said.

"Thanks to the effective measures taken, it is possible to say today that the worst has passed. The most serious consequences have been averted."

"Of course, the end is not yet, it is not time to rest," he added.

But Mr. Gorbachev attacked the United States and the Western media for launching an "unrestrained anti-Soviet campaign" over the accident.

"Generally speaking, we faced a veritable mountain of lies — most malicious lies..." he said.

Israeli troops wound two Al Najah students

OCCUPIED WEST BANK (Agencies) — Israeli soldiers shot and wounded two Palestinian student demonstrators and three other Palestinians were hit by rocks during a protest in the occupied West Bank, the Israeli military said Wednesday.

The Palestine Press Service, a Palestinian news agency, reported that four Palestinians had been wounded, all of them by soldiers.

An army official speaking on condition of anonymity said about 100 students at Al Najah University in Nablus marched out of the campus and began stoning an Israeli border police patrol.

Troop reinforcements were called in, the spokesman said. The demonstrators entered the old town market and continued to throw rocks.

The troops then opened fire, wounding two demonstrators, the spokesman said. The local news agency said the wounded were hospitalised with medium injuries.

The army imposed a curfew on the old market and the nearby Balata refugee camp.

According to the Palestine Press Service, the demonstration began after rumours that an "independence" day march organised by Jewish settlers from the nearby settlement of Alon Moreh was to go through downtown Nablus.

King Juan Carlos calls for cooperation against terrorism

STRASBOURG (Agencies) — Spain's King Juan Carlos on Wednesday called for more cooperation against terrorism and for a European Community (EC) role in world disarmament.

In the first address by a Spanish monarch to the European Parliament, King Juan Carlos also appealed to member states to overcome their difficulties and work towards European unity.

Speaking just four months after Spain joined the EC, King Juan Carlos said: "The cooperation already existing in the fight against terrorism must be intensified."

"We must use all legitimate means at our disposal to protect freedom and democracy against the threat of those who fanatically attempt to destroy the basic principles that inspire the system of peaceful co-existence of our European society," he said.

King Juan Carlos, only the third monarch to address the directly-elected assembly after King Hussein in 1983 and Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands in 1984, warned that Europe had overcome internal conflict only to become a potential stage for world conflicts.

"Within the framework of Western security, Community Europe can and must play a determining role in order to achieve a world governed by détente that enables concrete results to be obtained in the area of disarmament," he said.

Bombings, missile attacks reported in Jakarta

JAKARTA, Indonesia (Agencies) — Bombs exploded on Wednesday at a national monument and outside an office building, but three primitive projectiles fired at the Japanese and U.S. embassies failed to blow up, police said.

No casualties were reported in any of the attacks.

Intelligence sources, who insisted on anonymity, told AP attacks apparently were the work of a small extremist group with possible support from Libyans.

Police said a Japanese suspect was arrested, and that they also were seeking three Libyans.

The U.S. embassy was evacuated for two hours and cordoned off by Indonesian security men after a rocket made of 10 soft-drink cans was fired from a nearby fair ground, exploding with a loud noise before hitting the embassy courtyard.

Segments of a projectile were found on the roof of the embassy chancery, but a U.S. spokesman said he was not sure if it was debris from that rocket or a second missile.

A car exploded in front of an office block housing the Canadian embassy, catching fire and damaging six vehicles nearby. But a Canadian embassy spokesman said he did not believe the embassy was a target.

A rocket fired from a nearby hotel also hit the third-floor of the Japanese embassy, a spokesman said. He described it as a bandaged projectile and said damage was negligible.

Police said it was fired from a hotel room across the street from the Japanese mission, where they found a bag, a rocket launcher and about three litres of gasoline.

Police said they had arrested a Japanese suspect whom they identified as Chousuki Kikuchi, and were searching for three Libyans who hotel officials said had been seen with him earlier.

Deputy Attorney General Nugroho said Kikuchi was detained because he was seen trying to run out of the hotel carrying a bag.



His Majesty King Hussein meets Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in Baghdad Tuesday night (photo on left) and is greeted upon return to Amman on Wednesday by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan (Petra photos)

King returns after talks in Baghdad

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein returned home early Wednesday after an overnight working visit to Baghdad during which he held talks with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein on the current situations in the region and the latest developments in the Arab arena.

The King was received upon his return by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

Returning home with the King were Prime Minister Zaid Rifai,



His Majesty King Hussein meets Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in Baghdad Tuesday night (photo on left) and is greeted upon return to Amman on Wednesday by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan (Petra photos)

Shultz: U.S. has cautioned Israel, Syria against war

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz said on Wednesday the United States had cautioned Israel and Syria not to start a war at a time of high tension between the countries.

"We don't believe war between Israel and Syria would serve either party's interests and we have cautioned against it," he said at the Overseas Writers' Club here.

Mr. Shultz said Syria had carried out a "big build up" of its forces in Lebanon and moved its fortifications forward.

"It's a highly tense situation, there's no doubt about that," he said.

Mr. Shultz gave no details of the alleged Syrian military build up but Israeli military sources quoted by Reuters said it had built new tank emplacements close to the Israeli border in eastern Lebanon.

He added, however, that there were no signs Syria planned to arm the fortifications or launch an immediate attack.

Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres said on Tuesday he had sought to begin peace talks with Syria, but had been rebuffed.

His remarks, which Mr. Shultz said on Wednesday he had noted but did not comment on, were the first public indication that Israel sought peace talks with Damascus.

Peres said on Wednesday that Israel would fight Syria's involvement in "terrorism."

"It is better to focus attention on a matter in which we have many partners... than on one which admittedly causes discomfort but is a more long-range problem," Peres said during an interview on Israeli Radio.

"If we try to do both at once, we will find that neither is effective."

Peres described the changes in the Syrian deployment in Lebanon as "limited."

According to Peres, last week's reports that Israel and Syria were on the brink of war were fabricated by PLO leader Yasser Arafat. "He sent out letters to all the Arab countries saying Israel was about to attack the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and to hit Syria," Peres charged.

According to Peres, Israel should wait "even if it takes a bit longer" and requires more patience, until the United States and Europe are convinced that there are Syrian fingerprints (on terrorism).

Iraqis overrun strategic mountain and two peaks

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraqi forces swept across Iranian-held mountains of northeastern Iraq, capturing a strategic mountain and two peaks, and Iraqi forces further south fought off two Iranian attacks on Iraqi-occupied Iranian territory, war communiques said Wednesday.

A communique broadcast on Baghdad Radio said the recapture of the northern territory took place Tuesday night.

Iraqi forces and Kurdish paramilitary troops seized the strategic peak of Kardamand from Iranian hands, said the communique. The Iraqis also stormed and recaptured two nearby mountain peaks, Kodo and Kardako, in the northern Kurdistan region.

Backed by artillery and warplanes, Iraqi forces stormed the "Kardamand peak that reaches up to the skies... closing the doors in the face of the enemies and in the face of their collaborators (Kurdish rebels supported by Iran)," the communique said.

"Kardamand, which provides full security for our country and our forces in that area, was returned to the heart of the nation," said the Iraqi communique.

Kardamand overlooks the ski resort of Haj Omran in northern Iraq on the 1,180-kilometre border-warfront.

A "ferocious battle" took place and the "situation settled completely in favour of the Iraqi forces," with the Iranian forces crushed and "large numbers" taken prisoner, said the communique.

An Iranian counter-claim, Iran's Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) said the Iranians repelled the Iraqi northern assault, shot down four Iraqi helicopter gunships and knocked out five tanks and several military vehicles.

Another communique read by a spokesman on Baghdad Radio said Iraqi forces beat back Tuesday night two Iranian attacks on positions Iraqi soldiers occupied inside Iran last week.

Iranian Television said later Wednesday that 31 people were killed when Iraqi planes bombed an Iranian passenger train.

It said many others were wounded in the train attack at Haft Tappeh station, 60 kilometres inside the Iran-Iraq border and 510 kilometres southwest of Tehran.

The train was bound for Tehran on a line frequently used to transport troops to Gulf war fronts and bring wounded men back.

U.S. destroyer 'intercepted' Iranian frigate in Gulf

WASHINGTON (AP) — A U.S. navy warship intercepted an Iranian frigate this week as it approached a U.S. cargo ship in the Gulf of Oman, then radioed warships and convinced the Iranians to leave the area, U.S. government sources said Wednesday.

The incident occurred shortly before midnight Eastern Daylight Time on Monday, or during the early morning hours of Tuesday in the Gulf of Oman, the sources said. The U.S. cargo ship that the Iranians attempted to approach was the President McKinley, the sources added.

The officials, who agreed to discuss the matter only if not identified, called the incident a "confrontation," but stressed there had been no threats made with weapons. The sources said the U.S. warship had intercepted the Iranian frigate so quickly that the Iranians never had a chance to demand that the cargo ship leave and to submit to a search.

"It was a confrontation," said one source. "We had to tell them a couple times to move on. There was tension."

The Iranians succeeded for the first time last January in forcing a U.S. cargo vessel to submit to a search by a boarding party. The Iranians maintain that under international law, they have the right to search the cargo ships of neutral countries for any war goods that might be bound for Iraq.

Although the United States protested the search of the cargo ship President Taylor on Jan. 12, the State Department later acknowledged Iran had the right as "a belligerent to ascertain whether neutral shipping is being used to provide contraband to an opposing belligerent."


The sources said the latest incident involved the President McKinley, which at the time was bound for the port of Fujairah in the United Arab Emirates, and a 94-metre long frigate of the Iranian navy.

The sources declined to provide the name of the American warship that intervened, citing security. But one official said the vessel was a Spruance-class destroyer, one of six American warships stationed in either the Gulf or the Gulf of Oman.

Operations at the country's two seaports, Chittagong and Khulna, came to a complete halt, port officials said.

In Rajshah in the north, 10 people were arrested for throwing stones at police, a senior police official said, adding they were to be freed Wednesday night.

"The strike has proved once again that Ershad has no support and the so-called majority of the government-backed party in the election is a farce," Ms. Wajed said.



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Central Bank curbs credit facilities to exchangers

AMMAN (R) — The Central Bank of Jordan said Wednesday banks had been ordered to slash credit facilities to exchange houses, following the collapse of one of the nation's oldest finance firms with debts exceeding \$50 million.

"We gave instructions to all the banks yesterday to reduce the volume of facilities to exchange firms (to a level) not exceeding a ratio of two-to-one (credit to authorised capital)," the bank's deputy governor, Dr. Maher Shukri, told Reuters in an interview.

He said the banks were also advised to avoid unsecured credits to owners of money-changing firms or to managers of public or private share-holding companies in their private capacities.

Dr. Shukri said the money-changers, notified of the edict Wednesday, had been obtaining bank credits seven or nine times their authorised capital, normally JD 100,000 (\$287,000), which "encouraged them to do unauthorised business."

Dr. Shukri identified the failed firm as Saliba and Rizk Shukri Rizk Exchange Company, whose co-partner Saliba Shukri Rizk ap-

parently committed suicide last Thursday.

Dr. Shukri estimated the firm's debts at JD 18 million (\$52 million), including JD 5.4 million (\$15.5 million) owed to four unidentified local and two foreign banks.

He said the Central Bank would not be able to act against the firm until it received reports from the firm's auditors and from a voluntary committee set up by the business community to study the situation.

But he added that Rizk had been cited for 14 violations, and "the prospects of the firm retaining its licence are nil."

Under a 1976 law, the 76 exchange houses in Jordan are allowed to exchange foreign currency, make commercial or invisible payments, and trade shares and bonds — although most of them also deal in gold and commodities and take deposits.

He said the Central Bank had to be "tactful" in its dealings with money-changers, who represent the free market in Jordan, lest any action was misconstrued as curbing the economy.



IFTAR: Commander-in-Chief of the Jordanian Armed Forces General Sharif Ibn Shaker and other officers offer evening prayers before Iftar (breakfast) on Wednesday at a banquet hosted by senior army, Civil Defence and Intelligence Department officers.

Committees prepare for expatriates' conference

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Labour and Social Development Khaled Al Haj Hassan has set up several committees representing the public and the private sectors to prepare for the second Jordanian expatriates' conference, due to be held in Amman in July.

According to a report in Al Dustour Arabic daily newspaper, the committees have already started work and plan to extend invitations to 600 expatriates to attend and take part in the projected conference.

Participants, the report said, will be representing Jordanian communities abroad and will address the conference on issues of concern to Jordanian expatriates. According to the paper, preparatory work for the conference will be completed before the middle of June.

Last month the minister made a two week tour of Arab gulf states where he met with government officials and representatives of Jordanians employed in these states. Discussion during the meetings centred on the topics on the agenda of the conference and proposals for helping expatriates and their families while on vacation in Jordan, when returning to settle here permanently or while they are employed abroad.

The minister described the outcome of his meetings as "fruitful" and he expressed hope that the forthcoming conference would be a success.

Jordan reviewing prices of oil imports, report says

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian government is currently holding talks with Saudi Arabia and Iraq to try and reach agreement on prices of oil imported from both countries, according to a report in Sawt Al Shaab Arabic daily newspaper. The report said that the talks started in the wake of the sharp drop in world oil prices. Under current prices, Jordan is expected to pay \$603 million for nearly 2,484 tonnes of oil during the fiscal year 1986, according to the paper, which did not give a source for the report.

Meanwhile, the government is going ahead with plans for rationalising fuel consumption and the use of energy resources. According to the paper, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources has concluded an agreement with an international consultancy firm to conduct a feasibility study on a rationalisation programme to cut down on energy and fuel consumption in 10 industrial businesses in the Kingdom. The result of the study was encouraging and proved that \$2 to \$3 million worth of fuel could be saved annually if the recommendations offered by the consultancy firm were implemented, the paper said.

The report said that the ministry has also conducted studies on energy consumption in small industries and commercial centres, hotels, hospitals and the transport sector in cooperation with a French firm. A programme has been worked out for advising these businesses on ways of reducing fuel and energy consumption, it continued.

In addition, the Ministry of Energy has started a study on reducing fuel consumption in power stations and distribution networks and the results will be known in the third quarter of this year, the paper added.

Communications official returns from postal union meetings

AMMAN (Petra) — Ministry of Communications Under-Secretary Mansour Ibn Tarif has returned to Amman after heading Jordan's delegation to the meeting of the Universal Postal Union (APU) executive council held in Bern, Switzerland, on April 23.

Mr. Ibn Tarif said in a statement to the Jordanian News Agency, Petra, that the meetings discussed topics related to the union's management and postal services in addition to the results of international studies and surveys conducted last year. Among these studies there was a survey on the

effectiveness of an international postal exchange system in which Jordan participated, he continued. Participants also approved the APU budget for 1985 and its proposed budget for 1987. Also discussed were a number of subjects related to international express mail, international aid in postal service, parcel services, postal information as well as basic charges for surface and air mail.

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Government statement draws attention to Israeli acts of terrorism against Arabs

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan Wednesday called world attention to acts of terrorism committed since 1937 by Israel against the Arab people in general and the Palestinians in particular and said that ever since the Zionist movement set out to establish a Jewish state in Palestine it used terrorist actions against the people of Palestine to achieve its end by force and through aggression.

In a statement issued on the eve of the 38th anniversary of the usurpation of Palestine by Zionist forces and the establishment of the Jewish state, the government said that the Middle East region is still in turmoil and peace is as far from the region as ever because of Israel's continued occupation of Arab land and its arbitrary measures against the Arab population and plots against neighbouring Arab states.

Over the past century the Zionist movement has shown its evil and aggressive nature time after time and has demonstrated its barbaric and brutal means of acquiring territories by force to pursue its racist ideology, the statement said.

The statement, issued by the Jordanian News Agency, Petra, said that 1948 marked the start of organised Zionist terrorism directed against the Palestinians with the aim of evicting them from their homeland and building Jewish settlements on their territory.

Following the occupation of Palestinian land in 1948 and after 1967 when the Israelis completed their occupation of all of Palestine, Zionist terrorist actions continued unabated against the Arab population, with Jewish settlers attacking Arab property, the Israeli government confiscating Arab land and detaining thousands of Arab inhabitants without trial after demolishing their homes and conducting the most barbaric treatment against their families and their children, Petra said.

The agency went on to say that the past half century has witnessed the most notorious acts of terrorism committed by the Zionist movement against the Palestinians and the Lebanese following the 1982 invasion of Lebanon. Petra cited acts of terrorism committed by the Zionist movement in Palestine under British mandate, after the 1948 occupation and following the 1967 war. The agency said terrorist activities against the Arabs were not confined to occupied Arab lands, but went beyond the borders to include Palestinian personalities in Beirut and other Arab and European capitals.

In addition, Petra said, the Israelis have been intent on violating the sanctity of Christian and Muslim holy places in Palestine. The burning of Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem and the ongoing excavations under the Al Haram Al Sharif, the storming of Al Ibrahim Mosque in Hebron, and the encroachments on Christian holy places are but a few examples of the atrocities committed by the Zionists in Palestine, Petra said.

Zionist leaders, as early as 1896, attempted to establish a Zionist state in Palestine. The first Zionist World Congress was declared at a meeting in Basle, Switzerland under Dr. Theodor Herzl in August 1897 and stated: "The aim of Zionism is to create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine. The congress contemplates the following means to the attainment of this end:

1. The promotion on suitable lines of the settlement of Palestine by Jewish agriculturists, artisans and tradesmen.
2. The organisation and binding together of the whole of Jewish means of appropriate institutions, both local and general.
3. The strengthening of Jewish sentiment and national consciousness.
4. Preparatory steps towards obtaining government consent are necessary, for the attainment of Zionism.

The Arab World, under Sharif Hussein of Mecca, then embarked on endeavours not only to rid itself from Ottoman rule but also to thwart Zionist efforts to occupy Palestine. In 1915, Sir Henry McMahon, British High Commissioner in Cairo received an offer from Sharif Hussein to help Britain against the Turks provided that Britain would support the principle of an independent Arab state. McMahon accepted the offer and pledged that his country would guarantee Arab aspirations.

After the First World War, however, Britain went back on its promise to the Arabs who had allied themselves with Britain and France against Germany and the Ottoman Empire. Instead of helping the Arabs to fulfil their aspirations, British Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour issued a declaration in 1917 which he contained in a letter sent to the Zionist leader Baron Rothschild. The letter to Lord Rothschild said: "I have much pleasure in conveying to you on behalf of His Majesty's government the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations, which has been submitted to and approved by the cabinet. His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this objective, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

Between 1917 and 1947 Palestinian Arabs held meetings in Jerusalem and rejected the Zionist plans and the partition of Palestine. But the British government continued during this period to help Jews to settle in Palestine in collaboration with the United States. Under the provisions of a British White Paper issued in May 1939, Jews were allowed an immigration quota at the rate of 10,000 a year, but the real figures of immigrants was far greater and Palestine was flooded by Jews who were helped to acquire arms and training in preparation for the 1948 invasion of Arab territories.

In 1947, the United Nations set up a special committee on Palestine which comprised representatives of 11 nations entrusted with preparing a report on the Palestinian issue and submitting it to the U.N. secretary general. The committee's members visited Palestine in June 1947 and were met by a general strike by the Arabs who saw in it a means of consecrating the partition of their homeland. At the end, the committee presented two separate plans to the United Nations secretary general. The first plan called for the following:

1. Terminating British mandate in Palestine by August 1948.
2. The proclamation of Arab and Jewish states in Palestine.
3. The formation of a committee to supervise the transition period.
4. Implementation of the 1947 partition plan.
5. The formation of provisional governments in the Arab and Jewish states.
6. Guaranteeing the rights of all on an equal basis.
7. Establishing national security forces in each state to safeguard security and peace.

The second plan ran as follows:

1. The formation of a provisional government in the whole of Palestine.
2. Britain to start evacuating the territory in one year.
3. Immigration to Palestine should halt during this year.
4. The issue of Jews should be tackled through international agreements.
5. The provisional government should call a constituent assembly to draw up a democratic constitution for Palestine.
6. The constitution should provide for the independence of Palestine guaranteeing its sovereignty and territorial integrity with all its subjects enjoying equal rights.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Syrian speaker sends cable to Fayez

AMMAN (Petra) — Lower House of Parliament Speaker and Chairman of the Arab Parliamentary Union (APU) Akef Al Fayez has received an invitation from the Speaker of the Syrian People's Council Mahmoud Al Zu'bi to visit Syria where the APU headquarters are based. In a cable to Mr. Fayez, Mr. Zu'bi expressed his appreciation for the efforts made by Mr. Fayez to make the APU 17th conference, held recently in Amman, a success.

Deputy returns from Mexico

AMMAN (J.T.) — Lower House of Parliament member Edward Khamis has returned to Amman from Mexico after taking part in the 75th International Parliamentary Union conference which was held in Mexico in April. Mr. Khamis, deputy of the West Bank town of Bethlehem, also visited a number of Latin American countries where he met with Jordanian expatriates living there.

WHO to discuss jobless doctors

AMMAN (Petra) — The World Health Organisation (WHO) has decided to hold an international conference in Mexico in September to study the distribution of doctors in a bid to solve doctors' unemployment.

Security forces find heroin on Alia plane

AMMAN (J.T.) — An apparent attempt to smuggle heroin to Libya on a plane belonging to Alia, the Royal Jordanian Airline, has been thwarted. A report in Sawt Al Shaab Arabic daily newspaper said that security men searching the plane at the Queen Alia International Airport found a package containing 543 grammes of the drug hidden under one of the plane's seats. The plane, according to the paper, was bound for Tripoli on a scheduled flight. The report said investigations are underway to identify the smugglers.

Drug squad continues efforts to combat trafficking

By Najwa Najjar
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The problem of drugs has spread to almost every corner of the world and although narcotics are not a major problem in Jordan, authorities predict trouble in the coming years if the issue is not dealt with properly, according to Colonel Hashem Al Qaisi, director of the Anti-Narcotics and Forgery Department in Jordan.

The problem of illegal trading and the use of drugs first surfaced in Jordan in the early 1930's but it remained insignificant for a long period after. Col. Al Qaisi attributed this to the small size of the Jordanian population then and the strong social traditions which scorn any aberration.

However, as the drug problem escalated internationally, more Jordanian students, businessmen and tourists travelled to countries where the drug trade is widespread and the number of foreign nationals, who may have used drugs in their countries, rose significantly in Jordan, he continued.

According to Col. Al Qaisi, there are now 20 drugs used in Jordan, besides hashish. "In the last survey done in the beginning of 1983, we found that three out of every 10,000 people in Jordan have some connection with drugs. However, the survey notes the growing use of a new drug, heroin," said Col. Al Qaisi.

Rising use of drugs

A report compiled by the Anti-Narcotics and Forgery Department in 1985 indicated that the number of drug users in Jordan rose by 31.5 per cent in comparison with 1984. Jordanians make up 40 per cent of the total number of drug users in the Kingdom and of this 40 per cent, 16 per cent are Jordanian females. The report also showed that 49 per cent of the Jordanian drug users resorted to heroin, while the rest limited themselves to cannabis.

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Col. Hashem Al Qaisi

does not mean that lower income individuals do not consume drugs, he said.

However, they tend to use hashish since it is cheaper. Although there are drug users in the kingdom Col. Al Qaisi stated that "Jordan's problem does not seem to be so much a consuming and producing problem but a trafficking problem."

Mrs. Helene May Ibrahim was sentenced to five years in prison on March 16, 1986 for possessing 1 kilogramme of cocaine. The investigation found that Helene, an Australian, was working with a gang based in Latin America and which smuggled cocaine. She came to Amman to take drugs back to Australia.

Helene's case is typical of many drug traffickers who use Jordan's reputation as being neither a producer nor a consumer of drugs as people coming from Jordan would be less subject to searches in their countries, said Col. Al Qaisi.

Other smugglers come to the Queen Alia International Airport as transit passengers or to change planes. This offers the smugglers a greater safety margin as happened in one operation when the drugs were seized but the smuggler escaped and did not claim his baggage when he realised that he had been discovered.

Couriers

Some smugglers use couriers who have been resident in Jordan for a long time or who hold Jordanian nationality as well as government and public employees whose jobs require them to travel regularly and who are not subject to checks, he continued.

Col. Al Qaisi stated that the majority of smugglers are not Jordanian. In 1985, 261 individuals were arrested for smuggling and taking drugs. Ninety-six per cent of the cases were trafficking cases and of this number 19 per cent of the narcotics were destined for African and European countries, four per cent went to the Jordanian market and 77 per cent went to neighbouring Arab countries.

Jordan's location and reputation is not only ideal for international drug trafficking but also for drug producing and consuming neighbours such as Egypt and the Gulf states.

Smugglers also take advantage of the fact that 60 per cent of Jordan is desert and this covers most of the border areas with Syria, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. This region is inhabited by a few bedouins and has a few border posts. Additionally, these expanses of desert are difficult to patrol. There are few border posts because of the

border to the north, north east, and south extends over more than 1,200 kilometres. Smugglers can very easily cross the border into Jordan, avoiding border check points completely. The Anti-Narcotics and Forgery Directorate has the greatest difficulty in policing such a long border.

Border posts

In addition, the main border posts thorough which travellers enter and leave the country are also used by drug smugglers. As there is not enough time to conduct a thorough luggage search without delaying the flow of traffic through the port the smugglers use the border posts, to their advantage. Heavy goods vehicles and refrigerated trucks are used to transport drugs to countries like Iraq, Gulf states and Egypt. Col. Al Qaisi said.

In 1973 a special directorate was founded to combat the illegal trade and use of drugs and a new law was passed to deal with this activity. Although trafficking decreased by 70 per cent in 1985 from the previous year, the obstacles to controlling the problem still exist. Because of this Col. Al Qaisi is concerned that the problem of drug addiction could be a future problem.

A national committee has recommended the establishment of a specialised centre for the treatment of drug addicts and they suggested that this should be coupled with effective police action to combat drug traders and a campaign to raise public awareness about the dangers of drugs.

Presently there is a military court based in Amman to deal with all cases of drug abuse. Penalties for the possession of drugs range from six months to three years and for trafficking smugglers can receive sentences from five to 15 years in prison with hard labour and fines of between JD 3000 and 5000.

There is also a centre, which is part of the Ministry of Health, which provides remedial care for addicts, but it needs improvement, said Col. Al Qaisi.



Members of the security forces destroy seized drugs in incinerators at the Jordan Cement Factories in January this year (Petra photo)

هذا من الاموال

When Enzo Biagi asks questions, Italians respond; Journalist is popular for talks with Qadhafi, Sindona

By John Winn Miller
The Wall Street Journal

MILAN — As the U.S. Sixth Fleet converged ominously on the Libya coast and was threatened in the Gulf of Sidra, Col. Muammar Qadhafi summoned Enzo Biagi to Tripoli.

The Italian journalist was amazed at the Libyan leader's calmness. Mr. Qadhafi said there was no chance of an American attack and ended the 30-minute taped television interview by nonchalantly riding off on a bicycle. Something there clearly wasn't working, Mr. Biagi recalls.

The crew flew out with an international scoop practically in the shadow of the approaching American bombers. That is the luck of Enzo Biagi. But the state-run RAI network, for reasons never made completely clear, delayed broadcast of the interview for a week, triggering charges of political interference. That too is the luck of Enzo Biagi.

Stirring things up

For nearly half a century Mr. Biagi has racked up one scoop after another, all the while fighting and infuriating judges, editors and politicians. But his straightforward, anti-intellectual style has also made him one of Italy's most popular and powerful journalists — as well as one of its more controversial ones.

His weekly TV news programme, "Spot," competes against the likes of "Dallas," but still draws 15 million viewers, or a 40 per cent market share in this country of 55 million people.

In the world of Italian journalism, where political leaning is sometimes as important as skill, Mr. Biagi has managed to remain remarkably independent. Since taking his first job at a Bologna newspaper when he was 18 years old, he has been fired from or quit most of Italy's top news org-

anisations, usually over a question of principle.

When Mr. Biagi listens it seems just about everybody wants to talk: the Turk who shot the Pope, the hijackers of the Achille Lauro, world leaders from West and East, terrorists of right and left, Mafia dons, Woody Allen.

For the 65-year-old grandfather, journalism isn't just a job, it is his life. He has no hobbies and practically no social life, though he will slip out for an occasional opera with his wife, and from time to time he reads and relaxes at his country house outside Bologna.

Despite a quadruple bypass operation, he works at least eight hours almost every day, writing by hand, and is so prolific — 22 books, weekly newspaper and magazine columns, a weekly TV news show — that one colleague has dubbed him "a one-man news agency."

'Looks' aren't everything

He hardly looks the role of media powerhouse. "I have an everyday face, neither younger nor beautiful," he says with a broad smile from behind his desk in a tiny, sparsely furnished office at RAI. "But I don't have problem with 'look.' The most important thing for a journalist is to be credible."

Slightly stooped, he is short, with neatly parted white hair covering a balding pate, dark brown eyes and ears that stick out ever so slightly where they meet thick-rimmed glasses. He is partial to white socks and mixing tweeds, plaids and stripes in a nonetheless elegant style.

The son of a sugar refinery worker, he got into television by accident when the head of RAI TV decided it would be a good idea to bring in new blood from the print world.

At the age of 40, Mr. Biagi, who had broadcast propaganda for the

invading U.S. Army in World II, was asked to do a TV special and then was named head of the nightly news on RAI in 1961. It took only a year for him to quit. "The world of politics in Rome wasn't right for me," he says. "I thought the public was the most important thing."

While working as editor and writer for a number of newspapers and magazines he continued to do occasional TV work and last year launched Italy's first daily late night programme of news and interviews.

This year, RAI moved the show to prime time, made it a weekly and changed the name to "Spot," a 70-minute current events show that has gained a large audience. "It goes to show that journalism sometimes works," Mr. Biagi says wryly.

Mr. Biagi's popularity was confirmed by a recent survey about TV personalities by Panorama magazine that found he has a recognition rate of 84 per cent and that ranked him first or second in every category such as believability or clarity. How he does it is something of a mystery.

In person he is warm and affable. On camera, sitting stiffly behind a plain desk, he is stern, rarely smiling and speaks in an authoritative, resonant voice with only a trace of an Emilian accent that adds an extra "o" or two. He can ask tough questions but avoids the flash and polemics so popular among Italians. And he sometimes even forgets to look at the camera. "It's the camera that watches me," he says.

But what would seem a weakness is his strength. Television critic Franco Leonardi of Rome's Il Messaggero newspaper says Mr. Biagi's secret is that he is accessible to the average Italian and almost invisible on camera. "He never tries to be the protagonist of his shows," Mr. Leonardi says. "He lets the others speak."

He is everyday in appearance,



Enzo Biagi

in the style of questions, in his curiosity, in the way he writes. Says one admiring journalist, "He is an extremely thoughtful, anti-intellectual, sometimes irreverent, but plain spoken."

Once when writing about corruption in Italy, Mr. Biagi began his column: "Chicago in the 1920s must have been a happy place. You could recognise the gangsters."

Some detractors

Not everyone appreciates this style. "Biagi is serious, prepared and tries to stick to a train of thought," says Dr. Giuseppe Pietravalle, a Milan psychiatrist. "It's a pity, however, that he often ends up being monotonous."

Angelo Del Teste, a government employee in Rome, is more blunt. "I don't like him," he says. "He is arrogant and writes about banal things."

Most Italians disagree, however. Alberto Cavallari, former editor of Corriere della Sera, Italy's leading daily, says "He is a brilliant journalist, full of life and humour."

Even Mr. Qadhafi was apparently a fan; Mr. Biagi was told

the RAI was received in the former Italian colony across the Mediterranean.

But it isn't always who Mr. Biagi sees that makes headlines, but what he does. Take the case of the black briefcase. Until 1982, the briefcase never left the side of Roberto Calvi, the president of Banco Ambrosiano. When Mr. Calvi was found hanged in London after his bank collapsed with \$1.2 billion missing, his briefcase had vanished.

On April 1, Mr. Biagi disclosed that the bag had come into his possession a few hours before and, in a great piece of television drama, he opened it, ever so slowly, revealing its contents one by one. (All the while bopping, he now says, that it wasn't some terrible April Fool's Day joke.)

Inside were Mr. Calvi's false passports, family pictures, letters to Vatican officials, and 23 keys, seven of them appearing to be to safety deposit boxes. Only the keys were considered a significant discovery.

Angry investigating judges seized the bag and slapped Mr. Biagi with a judicial warning letter for possible obstruction of justice. The bag had come from a right-wing politician who said he got it from two unidentified men.

Wrong side of the law

Mr. Biagi also angered judges with a series of prison interviews. Mr. Biagi was the only person to interview Mehmet Ali Agca, the Turkish terrorist serving a life sentence for shooting Pope John Paul II.

In March, he had the last interview with Michele Sindona before the financier was killed by cyanide poisoning. (As in the case of his friend Mr. Calvi, it is still unknown whether Mr. Sindona's death was suicide or murder.)

Some charge that Mr. Biagi unfairly uses the power of the

state-run network to open doors, to which he snaps, "RAI has never intervened on my behalf."

As Mr. Leonardi, the critic, explains "By now he is Enzo Biagi, a name no one dares touch. On the strength of his personality he can open doors that others can't."

In Italy that may be so, but it doesn't explain how he got to late U.S. Sen. Robert Kennedy, Eleanor Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Polish Leader Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski, Albert Sabin or Nazi war criminals.

How does he do it? "I just ask," Mr. Biagi says. "You never know who will receive you for an interview, or why."

Some critics call him banal, arrogant, boring, a writer who gives a false sense of objectivity. Journalist Ruggero Guarini even wrote a poem to Mr. Biagi saying he read his column not out of devotion but to marvel at "The most appreciated national habit: trivial moralism from newspapers."

Mr. Biagi shrugs off the criticism and says, "An old boss once told me that the worst thing for a journalist is to be boring. He said only one person had the whole truth, Jesus Christ, and they crucified him. That didn't seem to him to be the major aspiration of journalists."

A lot of politicians from left and right would like to do just that to Mr. Biagi. His sometimes scabrous writings have drawn the ire of just about every major party. The Christian Democrats, Italy's largest party, once accused him of writing "insults for pay."

But Mr. Biagi obviously relishes the attention. The last thing one sees stepping out of his office is a newspaper cartoon.

Frame one: "Biagi interviewed Sindona and he was poisoned."

Frame two: "Biagi interviewed Qadhafi and he was bombed by the Americans."

Frame three: "Stop Biagi before it is too late."

Randa Habibs
Corner

'Killing fields'

Once again, I feel urged to talk about the killing of dogs.

No one argues the right of municipalities to fight the danger created by stray beasts, dogs included. But there are three matters related to this issue, which are of great concern.

The first is the indiscriminate killing of animals, without ascertaining whether they belong to somebody, whether they are harmful or just poor animals that are suitable domestication.

It is my humble opinion that animals (dogs) should be killed only when it is made certain that they are either rabid or wild. Otherwise, dogs should be collected and kept in a place where interested people can view and pick them for pets when they like. There were many occasions when pet dogs were killed in their owners' own gardens. The indiscriminate killing of animals is surely inhumane.

The second is the method of killing: shooting animals to death is probably the most efficient and the least dangerous to humans. But the use of poisoned meat is seriously dangerous to both humans and other pets. A doctor told me that the strychnine poison used to kill dogs is very fatal to humans.

The third concern is the disposal of dogs' remains. In many cases the remains of a poisoned or shot animal are left to rot along the road or in a neighbourhood, which apart from being disgusting is very unhealthy.

No one objects to the extermination of wild or rabid dogs. But a man (or woman for that matter) who is cruel to those poor creatures, the animals, is most probably cruel towards people.

Singapore eyes thinking machines

Singapore is aiming to become a world centre for research into artificial intelligence. Stephanie Yanchinski explains that a key step in the process will be the upgrading of its computer expertise from mainly parts assembly to the design of thinking machines.

SINGAPORE — Singapore has set out on an ambitious course to become a world-class centre for research into artificial intelligence (AI). But it faces a number of barriers if it is to achieve its goal.

The country has wide-ranging plans to upgrade its computer expertise from mainly parts assembly to the design of "thinking machines" at the very forefront of computer technology.

Central to this strategy is Singapore's new \$21.5 million (U.S. \$9.8 million) Information Technology Institute (ITI) due to be completed in October. This will serve as a centre for applied research and development in all aspects of information technology. It will closely collaborate with industry, and artificial intelligence research is a top priority, with its own special laboratory.

ITI will also gather together research groups currently scattered throughout government agencies. In addition it is planned to launch new undergraduate programmes for AI training, and strengthen postgraduate research by inviting the best of foreign experts to teach.

The aim is to turn Singapore into a first rate centre for computer software design and win a share of the lucrative market in computer programmes. At the same time Singapore mandarins see AI as a tool for boosting industrial competitiveness, and a key to its cherished aim of becoming a "knowledge centre" for south-east Asia.

Dr. Yeo Ning Hong, Minister for Communications and Information and himself an expert in AI, told a recent gathering of AI experts that artificial intelligence "is essential to our role as a knowledge broker."

Artificial intelligence involves the application of the principles of human thought to computers. This converts simple "number crunchers" into thinking machines capable of matching or even bettering the best human experts in certain narrow areas.

Sales of AI hardware and software topped U.S. \$700 million in 1984, according to a new study by merchant bankers Rothschild. The new-found commercial success of AI is largely due to innovations in software, called expert systems. These sophisticated software programmes endow computers with the ability to mimic human thought.

Expert systems are not "free" thinkers. They work to set "rules," compiled from interviewing human experts about how they think. However, the "mechanical" boffins also depend on "heuristic" reasoning, sometimes called the art of good guessing.

Like human beings, the thinking computer builds up knowledge through experience. This enables it to tackle complex problems which cannot be solved using conventional computing.

Artificial intelligence is further advanced in the West and in Japan, where these expert computers help treat cancer, search for mineral and oil deposits, and help run steel mills and petrochemical refineries.

In the business world financiers are beginning to rely on expert systems in a variety of ways, from planning long-term capital investments to making snap decisions on equity dealing. One prototype programme even assesses the political risks attached to international investment projects for wary insurance underwriters and international loan merchants.

However, artificial intelligence

could be equally important to newly industrialised countries (NICs) rimming the Pacific Ocean, such as Singapore.

The "NICs" see it as one way to compete against bigger industrialised countries, by carving out special market niches. Prof. Edward Feigenbaum, computer scientist at Stanford University and key-note speaker at the recent meeting of AI experts in Singapore, said: "Artificial intelligence is ideal for a small nation such as Singapore. It requires no imports, as it is based on people's knowledge."

The Information Technology Institute will initially have a pool of 40 computer professionals who will be transferred from the existing Joint Software Engineering Programme between the National Computer Board and the Ministry of Defence. There will also be an advisory panel of international authorities.

The final programme remains to be worked out. But it is likely that ITI scientists will apply AI to solving practical problems in shipping, transportation and financial servicing, as well as the growing telecommunications business.

Expert systems would be able to organise container loading and storage at Singapore's busy port more efficiently, for example, and save many thousands of dollars a day.

Singapore also hopes to win its share of the future market for AI equipment and software which the American consultancy firm Arthur D Little predicts will jump to US \$200 billion by the end of the century.

The Joint Software Programme has already brought one expert system, POSE, close to commercialisation. Picture Oriented Software Environment is a tool for systems analysis, which can be taught in an hour.

The most lucrative application involves developed generic "shells" which could be tailored to fit a variety of industrial applications. At the moment it costs between U.S. \$60,000 and U.S. \$80,000 to purchase a single copy of AI software.

For instance, Rubicon, another product of Singapore's AI research under development, is a generic product for automating the production of expert systems for many industries, including transportation and financial servicing.

Singapore is also eyeing the huge untapped market for Chinese language programmes. At the ultra-modern Institute for Systems Science, IBM's Dr. Ifay Chang is leading a small team which is close to perfecting a Chinese version of Prolog, a popular AI software, which will find applications in designing Chinese expert systems.

However, China itself offers strong competition, says Edward Feigenbaum, as interest in artificial intelligence increases. Two years ago the Chinese Association of Artificial Intelligence boasted over 1,000 members.

Singapore faces other hurdles in developing AI into a fully-fledged business. Dr. Don Walker, computer scientist at Bell Communications Research, points out that there is such a worldwide shortage of AI experts that American industry "has had to resort to in-house training. Singapore will have even greater difficulties in finding the right people."

Office screens now number millions but health issue is unclear

By Dorothee Jung
Reuters

GENEVA — Visual display screens have become standard equipment in millions of offices around the world, but despite the most intensive research there is still widespread debate over whether or not they pose a danger to health.

Today more than 10 million workers in the United States sit in front of a visual display unit (VDU) each day. Trade unionists say that by the end of the decade more than half the workforce in developed countries and a large segment of Third World labour will be using them.

Over the past 15 years, as their use has become more and more widespread, there have been persistent reports of eyestrain, wrist and arm injuries, and worries about possible radiation hazards. Committees of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) in Geneva in the past year found the most common complaints among VDU operators were eyestrain, and muscular pains in neck, shoulders and wrists.

There was no evidence to confirm fears that radiation from

video terminals could cause hazards for pregnant women, but more research was needed on this issue, the committees said.

The latest research on all the health issues will be studied at a major international conference on VDU safety in Stockholm this week.

In Britain, a five-year survey of its employees by the big telecommunications firm British Telecom last year showed there was no evidence of permanent eye damage caused by VDUs.

But short-term eyestrain remains a problem. Experts said workplace design, including lighting and atmosphere controls, might be as much to blame as the screens themselves.

Also the type of work — varied or monotonous, high-pressure or interspersed by breaks — was crucial in determining whether stress aggravates existing health problems.

In Australia most attention is now directed at wrist and arm damage, with thousands of workers complaining of repetitive strain injury (RSI) caused by prolonged keyboard work.

Exact figures on how many people have been affected by RSI are not available but the Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) reported that there were currently

more than 20,000 claims against insurers Australia-wide for RSI-related injuries. It said "conservative estimates" are that they will cost the industry at least \$74 million.

There is intense debate in Australia over the extent to which the problem is physical, psychological or social. Most experts say the problem developed through a combination of extended use of VDUs and poor ergonomic design.

A prominent Melbourne surgeon, Dr. Ralph Poppenbeck, who specialises in the treatment of RSI, said recently it was a "complex medical and psycho-social phenomenon". He said it usually began as a frictional strain of tendons, muscles or other soft tissue.

Most patients recovered within six weeks. Poppenbeck said if recovery took longer, stress could be one of the reasons.

RSI has been called the "Australian disease" because it appears to occur there more than in most Western countries. But Megan Pickett, industrial officer for the Australian Journalists Association, believes that it occurs just as much in other industrialised countries but is not efficiently monitored.

"We are still getting a worrying

number of cases despite the upgrading of the physical environment. Journalists working to deadlines don't have time to take the advised breaks," she said.

A report by the ILO's advisory committee on salaried employees, and professional workers said stiffness in neck and shoulders was caused by operators having to keep their heads in a fixed position, and also partly by mental strain.

This could be alleviated by good planning of workplaces, with screens, tables and keyboards being fixed at heights suited to individual operators. The committee also recommended regular breaks every hour for operators doing repetitive work.

"VDU operators who are tied to their jobs all the time and assigned to uninteresting tasks with tight deadlines show very definite signs of health disorders which can become chronic, and even in the long run damaging to the system," the report said.

There has been persistent anxiety over so-called clusters of premature births, miscarriages and birth defects, which, it has been suggested, are caused by radiation from the screens. Some women have gone as far as donning lead aprons for protection against assumed radiation risk.

Manufacturers and many scientists insist that visual display units (VDUs) are safe. But research collected by the ILO and the WHO is not conclusive.

Latest tests from Sweden show that electromagnetic radiation caused severe defects and even death among mice. Male rats developed smaller testicles.

Clusters of reproductive problems were noticed as early as 1978 when four women working with VDUs in Australia were announced as having suffered miscarriages.

Many such clusters have been reported around the world, but scientists, governments and manufacturers say they are coincidental.

Critics counter by arguing that despite repeated soothing statements by governments and employers installing screens it has not been proved irrefutably that VDUs are safe.

"There is no reason for any person, male or female, young or old, pregnant or not, to be concerned about radiation health effects from VDUs," a Canadian health ministry report declared in 1983 following exhaustive tests throughout the country.

International business machines (IBM), the world's biggest computer company, has said rad-

iation absorbed from all consumer products, including office screens, televisions, wrist watches and fuels, is far below the most stringent safety standards set by the industrialised world.

The total radiation of all wavelengths from the use of a VDU for eight hours a day provides only one-half of one per cent of the radiation we receive from all sources, IBM's company medical officer in Britain has told employees.

The ILO is the main body expected to set guidelines. But its next meeting on the subject is not scheduled until late 1986.

The WHO is currently preparing international recommendations. Its last meeting on VDUs in December concluded that pregnant women had no reason to shy away from computer work, but at the same time cautioned that this did not mean they were safe.

Meanwhile the concern itself could be a problem, noted WHO expert Dr. Charles Kintaras. Could even the mere fear of an illness spark development of the real symptoms?

"How can we know that someone working on a VDU is not also doing a dozen other potentially hazardous things? We simply have no answers yet," he said.

Large mass detected halfway to edge of the universe

By Michael Lemonick
Washington Post

PRINCETON, New Jersey — Princeton University astronomers have found evidence that an extremely large mass is halfway between Earth and the edge of the observable universe.

Although the mysterious object has not been seen directly, the discovery estimated that its gravity is equal to a thousand large galaxies combined.

The discovery near the constellation Virgo could lead to a revolution in understanding of the universe. The object has been impossible to classify, according to Edwin L. Turner, a Princeton astrophysicist and principal author of a report on the find in last week's issue of the British journal Nature.

"The most conservative explanation would be that it's a cluster of galaxies as large and dense as any we've ever seen," he said.

"The problem is," he added, "that we should be able to see such a big cluster quite easily in our telescopes, and we don't." Observations with more sensitive radio telescopes also have failed to see evidence of such a cluster.

The other possibilities, considered extremely exotic by astronomers, are a black hole with the mass of 1 quadrillion stars and something called a cosmic string, a sort of crack in space itself.

"We may be seeing something that has only existed in our the-

ories until now," said J.R. Gott, another Princeton astrophysicist.

Evidence of the new object, gathered in early March with the 158-inch (4-metre) Mayall telescope at Kitt Peak National Observatory near Tucson, Arizona, is in the form of a double image in the sky. What seems to be two quasars, galactic cores so bright they are visible even at the universe's edge, is really just one.

The double image, a kind of space mirage, is caused by an intervening object whose gravity is so powerful that it bends the quasar's light, like a distorting lens. Predicted by Albert Einstein and others in the 1930s, the phenomenon was found first in 1979 and has been seen five times since. None of these so-called gravitational lenses, however, has been as powerful as this one.

The newly discovered lens separates the quasar images by about 2.5 minutes of arc, about 30 times the separation caused by the other lenses.

Astronomers have said they are convinced by the size of the separation that the unseen object, the source of the gravity causing the double image, must be unprecedentedly massive.

Mr. Turner acknowledged a slim possibility that the double images might be two distinct objects but said the evidence makes this extremely unlikely. Spectral analyses of both images, in which their light is separated into its

component colours, shows that each has essentially identical component wave lengths. Quasars usually are quite different in spectra.

"It would be too much of a coincidence for two quasars to be so nearly identical," he said.

Word about the new lens has spawned a flurry of papers exploring its consequences for prevailing theories about the universe. The 200-inch telescope atop Mount Palomar in California is being trained toward the lensing object and is also seeking evidence that other, fainter nearby quasars may have been lensed into double or triple images.

The number of images is important. If the lens is a cluster of galaxies, it will produce three or more images. If it is a black hole or cosmic string, it will produce two.

Moreover, all pairs of string-generated images would be arrayed with one image on each side of an invisible line. But if the object is a black hole, the images would be paired around a common centre. Preliminary searches have revealed only the pair of images, making it impossible to answer the question.

Cosmic strings and black holes are two of the newest additions to astronomy's menagerie of theoretical objects in the cosmos. Both are thought possible, but neither has been seen for certain.

Of the two, black holes are thought more likely. They are born when stars run out of fuel and collapse. If the star has enough mass, collapse is inexorable. Instead of stopping when the mass is compressed into a solid, compression continues indefinitely, beyond the point at which atoms lose their identity.

Finally, the gravity is so strong that light cannot escape. The star, now only a few miles wide, is black. Black holes can grow to enormous size by pulling in other stars, but astronomers calculate that it would take longer than the universe has existed for one to accumulate enough mass to be as powerful as the newly discovered object.

Cosmic strings, much more speculative, are strings of matter left after formation of the universe and far thinner than a subatomic particle but with a mass of billions of tons per inch of length. "Cosmic strings are a very exciting possibility in this case," Mr. Gott said, "because they should produce images with just this kind" of image splitting.

If none of the proposed theories about the mass proves correct, the unsolved puzzle could keep astronomers busy for years.

"My personal guess," said Bob Dan Paczynski, a Princeton astrophysicist, "is that this is what will happen."

Worldwide the average of people to physicians is round the 1,300 mark, though in the poorest countries as many as 70,000 people share a single doctor, numerically. Additional problems are the drain of physicians to the developed nations and their concentration in the cities. A bright spot, however, is the improvement in numbers over the years. Of the 15 nations randomly selected below, only one showed a decrease between 1985 and 1980.

Country	Population per physician 1985	1980	Percentage improvement
Oman	23,790	1,900	92.0
Saudi Arabia	3,970	730	81.6
Jordan	4,670	900	80.7
Nigeria	44,990	12,550	72.1
Egypt	2,260	970	57.0
Hong Kong	2,400	1,210	49.5
Singapore	1,910	1,150	39.7
Kenya	12,840	7,890	38.5
Chad	73,040	47,640	34.7
Burkina Faso	74,110	48,510	34.5
Kuwait	830	570	31.3
India	4,860	3,690	24.0
Tanzania</			

De Angelis in critical condition after accident

MARSEILLE, France (AP) — Italian Grand Prix auto racing driver Elio De Angelis was critically injured in an accident while testing his Brabham race car at the Le Castellet track in southern France Wednesday, Marseille's La Timone hospital said.

It issued a bulletin at 3 p.m. (1300 GMT), some four hours after the crash, saying he was still under examination in the emergency intensive care unit.

Australian driver Alan Jones, who was first on the scene of the accident in his Lola-Ford, said De Angelis' car was blazing fiercely and that there was nothing he could do until rescue crews arrived.

The accident happened in the 270 kilometre-per-hour left-right sweep after the pit straight. Robert Miard, press officer for the Paul Ricard Track at Le Castellet, said that for unknown reasons the car had spun several times, then somersaulted repeatedly, losing bodywork and landing upside down.

A fire started and was quickly extinguished, Miard said, and De Angelis was taken to Marseille in "a very critical condition, with very serious head injuries."

World champion Alain Prost with the McLaren team and Swede Stefan Johansson with Fer-

arri were also testing at the track.

After the accident, all the teams immediately packed up and left.

De Angelis was taken by helicopter of the Marseille Emergency Medical Services from the track to the La Timone hospital in Marseille — about 60 kilometres — the hospital bulletin said.

De Angelis, at 28 one of the veterans of the Grand Prix circuit, had been testing at the track since Tuesday, following Sunday's Monaco Grand Prix.

Officials of the team's tire suppliers, Pirelli, said in Milan, Italy, they had been told from the track that De Angelis' car crashed shortly after the end of the straight, while going through a sweeping left-right bend taken at around 270 kilometres per hour.

The Brabham, a radical new design this year by South African Gordon Murray, jumped over the steel guard rail and caught fire, they said, and De Angelis suffered burns and fractures, they added.

Pirelli spokeswoman Wanda Sabbioni said it was "a bad, bad

accident" and that De Angelis was in critical condition.

De Angelis, son of a wealthy Roman family, won only two Grands Prix from 108 starts, but has been regarded as a leading driver for many seasons. His talent was shown best in 1984, a year dominated by the McLarens of Niki Lauda and Alain Prost.

De Angelis finished third overall to win the "non-McLaren" title, with a consistency that gave him 11 points finishes in the 16 races.

He drove six years for the British Lotus team, but switched to Brabham this year over dissatisfaction with the star attention given by the team last season to Brazilian Ayrton Senna.

De Angelis' father was a European champion powerboat racer and Elio drove powerboats before he was old enough to compete in cars.

He started Formula Three in 1977 and won at Monza, Italy, and finished second in Monte Carlo. He moved into Formula Two late that year with a Ralt-Ferrari and his performances gave him a Ferrari test drive early in 1978.

Reluctant, however, to employ Italian drivers at that time, Ferrari did not follow up, but gave De Angelis permission to test his Formula Three car at its Fiorano track, preparing for victory in the prestigious Monaco race.

Becker, 18, now ranked fifth in the world, displayed the fierce serve and impressive strength which made him the first West German and unseeded player to win the Wimbledon singles last year.

"It has been a long year for me and I am a different player now," Becker said afterwards. "My first big tournament result was here last year."

The West German's second round opponent will be Argentine Horacio De La Pena, a 4-6, 6-3.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

French team leaves for Mexico City

PARIS (AP) — The 22-man French soccer team that will participate in the 13th World Cup beginning May 31 departed for Mexico City on Wednesday. On Tuesday, the team wound up what coach Henri Michel called a very successful 11-day training camp at Font Romeu, at 1,800 metres in the Pyrenees. France's first match in the final phase of Group C will be against Canada, June 1 at Leon. Hungary and the Soviet Union are the other French opponents in the group. The purpose of the Font Romeu camp was twofold, Michel said, to allow the players to recuperate from the long French season that just ended and to acclimate themselves to high altitude.

Denmark loses warm-up at Norway

OSLO (R) — World Cup finalists Denmark suffered the worst possible warm-up for the World Cup finals in Mexico Tuesday night when they slumped to an embarrassing 1-0 defeat against Norway. The Danes, playing with their hearts set more on avoiding injury than scoring goals, were sluggish and trainer Sepp Piontek used four substitutes in a bid to inject life into a tired-looking attack. Norway, who beat Argentina here 1-0 two weeks ago, refused to be intimidated by the Danes' physical power and skipper Hallvar Thoresen slammed home a 52nd minute penalty after he had been brought down in the box.

Becker goes back to where it all began — the Italian Open

ROME (R) — Wimbledon champion Boris Becker returned to the starting point of his meteoric rise to the top Tuesday as he swept into the second round of the Italian open tennis championship.

It was in Rome 12 months ago that Becker exploded onto the scene by reaching the semifinals before losing to eventual champion Yannick Noah of France.

Tuesday the third-seeded Becker inflicted crushing punishment on his Davis Cup team-mate Michael Westphal, winning their first-round clay court match 6-2, 6-0.

Becker, 18, now ranked fifth in the world, displayed the fierce serve and impressive strength which made him the first West German and unseeded player to win the Wimbledon singles last year.

"It has been a long year for me and I am a different player now," Becker said afterwards. "My first big tournament result was here last year."

The West German's second round opponent will be Argentine Horacio De La Pena, a 4-6, 6-3.

The Celtics 'prove it every night'

NEW YORK (AP) — The Milwaukee Bucks won the opening tap. They scored the first two points. Unfortunately, they still had to play 46 minutes and 40 seconds of basketball against the Boston Celtics.

"No one has said that they are not the best team," Bucks' coach Don Nelson said. "They pretty much prove it every night."

The latest hit of overwhelming evidence was presented Tuesday night. The Celtics charged into a 29-point lead with less than five minutes gone in the second quarter and blasted the Bucks 128-96 in the opener of their National Basketball Association Eastern Conference final series.

The Celtics led 29-12 after one quarter as Milwaukee tied six other teams for the fewest points scored in the first quarter of an NBA playoff game. The Bucks hit just 29.8 per cent of their field goal attempts in the first half, which ended with Boston in front 60-38.

The victory was the Celtics'

25th in their last 28 games. It was their 37th in a row at home where they are 46-1 this season. They are 6-0 against the Bucks this season.

Meanwhile, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar has shown no sign of slowing down of offense. And he has been especially effective against the Houston Rockets since the "Twin Towers" came into being.

But the NBA's all-time leading scorer was anything but effective Tuesday night as Akeem Olatunji and Ralph Sampson combined to limit him to only nine field goals in 26 attempts and a total of 21 points and four rebounds.

Olatunji and Sampson combined for 46 more points along with 29 rebounds and 11 blocked shots against the defending NBA champions.

The result was a 112-102 victory by the Rockets, which evened the Western Conference finals at 1-1.

"The big guys (Sampson and Olatunji) created a lot of

havoc," Lakers coach Pat Riley said. "We're going to have to be stronger with our moves to the basket. You can't be tentative with these guys."

Sampson had 24 points, 16 rebounds and five blocked shots while Olatunji had 22 points, 13 rebounds and six blocked shots. Many of those blocks were on shots taken by Abdul-Jabbar.

"One time I thought they dropped someone out of the ceiling to block my shot," Abdul-Jabbar said. "They had me hunched on my shot and looking for people. The ball just would not go down for me. It was a rough night."

The best-of-seven series now shifts to Houston for the third game Friday night and the fourth game Sunday. The Rockets are 41-5 at home this season, including a perfect 5-0 during the playoffs.

Rodney McCray added 16 points and 11 assists for the Rockets. Earvin "Magic" Johnson led the Lakers with 24 points, 19 assists and eight rebounds.

Kohde-Kilsch advances in W. German open

WEST BERLIN (R) — Third seed Claudia Kohde-Kilsch of West Germany cruised into the last 16 of the \$150,000 West German Women's Open tennis tournament Tuesday with a straight set win over compatriot Isabel Cueto. Kohde-Kilsch, the world's number four, needed 80 minutes to beat Cueto 7-5, 6-1 in a second round match. Ninth seed Jo Durie of Britain had a tense struggle in the opening set of her first round match against Argentina's Emilse Rapioni-Longo before winning it 11-9 in a tie-break. But she was well on top in the second set, completing a 7-6, 6-3 victory.

THE Daily Crossword by C.F. Murray

ACROSS

- 1 — monster
- 5 Linguist
- 10 Sign
- 14 Thanks —
- 15 Hints of things to come
- 16 D.C. office
- 17 Is in a precarious position
- 20 Harlequin's town
- 21 Mythical
- 22 Richness
- 23 Military force
- 24 Tree
- 25 Lily plant
- 28 Interim or Mont Blanc
- 32 US novelist
- 33 Cool, woody
- 34 Remote
- 35 Taking a chance
- 39 Comic Duttons
- 40 Defense system
- 41 God of war
- 42 US Humorist
- 43 George
- 44 Busy one
- 45 Sign of affection
- 46 The — Ranger
- 47 Pear
- 48 Hong Kong neighbor
- 51 Skilled worker
- 52 Olive genus
- 53 Behind the 8-ball
- 59 Soaks up
- 60 Has being
- 61 Aspects at sea
- 62 Dagger of cold
- 63 Warner at Gettysburg
- 64 Not so much

DOWN

- 1 Deep cut
- 2 Writer Chase
- 3 Bank deal
- 4 Perry Mason for one
- 5 Snob of a kind
- 6 Love it, style
- 7 Capitol Hill
- 8 Explosive letters
- 9 Tree
- 10 A sweetener
- 11 Eager
- 12 Collier style
- 13 Olive genus
- 14 Revelry cry of old
- 15 Entangle: var.
- 16 Chilly
- 17 Defect
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- 19 Hollywood director
- 20 Eyed in a way
- 21 "Clever and the Hearst"
- 22 Sadat
- 23 Fleming
- 24 — and pensates
- 25 Fourth estate
- 26 Concur
- 27 Type of sport
- 28 Lunch hour
- 29 Lumber
- 30 Whodunit item
- 31 It, town
- 32 Fault
- 33 Barbed
- 34 Fall short
- 35 Soon
- 36 May or Ann
- 37 Lethal
- 38 Porter and stout
- 39 Promontory
- 40 Shade tree
- 41 Even score
- 42 Power letters

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

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LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One sterling	1.5360/70	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.3780/85	Canadian dollars
	2.1940/50	West German marks
	2.4690/4700	Dutch guilders
	1.8212/22	Swiss francs
	44.72/77	Belgian francs
	6.9800/50	French francs
	1503/1504	Italian lire
	163.58/68	Japanese yen
	7.0900/50	Swedish crowns
	7.4800/4900	Norwegian crowns
	8.1050/1100	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	342.70/343.20	U.S. dollars

LONDON STOCK MARKET

LONDON (R) — Share prices ended sharply lower with Tuesday's buying enthusiasm shattered Wednesday morning by news of a £714 million rights issue from National Westminster Bank.

The rights issue was widely rumoured Wednesday morning and led to an early markdown in equity prices which was followed by a spell of bargain hunting after the first hour or so's trading. This proved short lived and shares dipped steadily towards the close.

Natwest closed 85p down at 870 on news it aims to raise the cash via a one-for-one rights issue at 200p per share. Other banks ended lower with Barclays down 33p to 514. At 1430 GMT the FTSE 100 index was 29.4 to its low of 1,593.9.

Wednesday's decline in the FTSE 100 index wiped out Tuesday's near 20 point gain and by 1447 GMT the index had dropped to 1,592.9, 30.4 points below Tuesday's closing. The firmer opening trend on Wall Street did little to restrain the afternoon losses on the market here, dealers said.

The rights issues from Natwest was the latest in a series of major cash calls including those from Prudential, Saatchi and Saatchi and Burmah. This succession of heavy calls on investors' resources has made many operators pessimistic of the short term outlook for share prices, as the possibility of further rights issues is at the back of some investors' minds.

YOUR DAILY Horoscope from the Carroll Righter Institute

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, MAY 15, 1986

GENERAL TENDENCIES: You have some very good, creative ideas today and although there are some obstacles connected with them, you would be wise to strive valiantly to make them your own.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) Go ahead with the big plans you have made regardless of the negativity you meet from a friend.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) You have a good idea how to improve conditions at home, though it may be a little costly.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Don't permit a worldly, tense condition interfere with important duties connected with associates.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to Jul. 21) Get busy at practical matters and forget a private anxiety. Try to increase your income and assets.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) Go after personal desires that mean a great deal to you and avoid one who is endeavoring to force you to do something you do not approve of.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) You have private aims that can help you to advance your career and steer clear of a bigwig who is irate and could take it out on you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Be with a generous friend who can be of great assistance to you and forget about going off on some silly tangent.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Get right at civic duties you have to attend to and don't let a boring person waste your time. Concentrate on organization.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Get away from home early and pursue advanced ideas through which you can make big headway.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Study how to get your practical affairs operating more efficiently and profitably. Have more faith in your mate.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Your partner wants to have an important discussion with you so put aside your desire for recreation now.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) Be sure to listen to what a co-worker has to suggest, since you are not so full of good ideas right now.

IF YOUR CHILD IS BORN TODAY ... he or she can understand any plan from its broadest scope and should have the praise that is needed in order to raise the incentive after doing some especially good work, and then much success can be achieved. Teach to be more objective in dealings with others.

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, MAY 16, 1986

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The daytime finds you with many brilliant ideas and good judgment in being able to put across your special talents, so be up early and lose no time today.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) You are highly inspired how to make a project successful, and then use a practical plan toward that end.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) A thoughtful act can please family now and then get busy with whatever practical affairs need fast attention.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Others come to you for advice and help with a project for which they know little about, so be willing to assist.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to Jul. 21) A fine idea you have to improve your monetary matters can be made better with the aid of a prominent person.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) If you are more practical in trying to gain your objectives, you can have much more success with them.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) You want to gain personal aims and your partner could be most helpful to you in this.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Do something thoughtful for a friend who can do much to help you in some practical affair.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) If you meet with a bigwig at some charming sport, then you can get backing for projects that are important to you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) You have a novel way of getting things done as you like them to be, but be sure to assist family with important duties.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Be sure to handle duties that will please your mate, then you have time to enjoy a hobby with a good friend.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Do something to indicate that you wish to continue the relationship with this influential person.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) Plan how to be more efficient at your work and perfect your talents before meeting with a powerful person.

Belgium faces renewed unrest

BRUSSELS (R) — Belgium faced a new wave of labour unrest Wednesday as trade unions across the political spectrum joined to endorse unofficial action by rail workers angry over a government austerity plan.

Train services were virtually paralysed as wildcat action by strikers in Charleroi, 50 kilometres south of Brussels, went into its second day, leading left and right-wing unions to declare an official 48-hour rail strike from Wednesday night.

In separate action in the north, police used tear gas in violent clashes Tuesday night with picketing Flemish miners who fear further redundancies at Belgium's only five remaining coal mines.

The unrest is over proposed public spending cuts of 200 billion francs (\$4.5 billion) by Mr. Wilfried Martens' centre-right coalition government which had shr-

ugged off a one-day strike of public service workers on May 6.

The earlier stoppage, called to demonstrate the depth of union discontent over the government's plans, was particularly effective in the more depressed French-speaking southern areas of the country where the present wave of strikes was launched.

But Martens said Tuesday night that the new round of protest action would not sway government economic deliberations.

Unofficial action by railwaymen Wednesday virtually halted all train services, including international traffic.

Commuters who took to their cars to beat the strike faced heavy road congestion with queues of cars stretching up to 10 kilometres leading into some towns.

Mail was also disrupted by the rail strike and further problems were expected after postal wor-

kers in Charleroi followed telecommunications workers in Liege and joined in the strike Wednesday.

The public service unions, caught off balance by the unofficial action, gave belated approval by calling for the 48-hour strike in the rail sector from midnight. They had earlier planned to stage a second day of action next Friday.

Unions say cuts being made by the Martens coalition will lead to lower health and unemployment benefits and more redundancies, particularly among teachers, in a country where unemployment remains at 12 per cent.

Mr. Martens, whose government was reelected last October on a platform of continued austerity, has refused to negotiate with the unions until it has worked out details of which sectors will be hit by the spending cuts.

Study suggests debt cancellation to ease crisis in African states

WASHINGTON (AP) — Massive debt cancellation may have to be part of a solution to the economic crisis faced by most African countries south of the Sahara desert, according to a study released Wednesday.

Most of the countries need to adopt wide-ranging reforms to reverse more than a decade of economic decline and "the difficulties of reversing this decline have been greatly intensified" by annual interest payments of \$6 billion they have faced since 1980, said a report of the Institute for International Economics, a private, non-profit research group.

To support vital policy changes aimed at recovery, "these countries will need about \$20-\$23 billion annually in external financing... of which only about \$16 billion now seems assured," the study said.

The institute addressed its findings to the special U.N. General Assembly session on the African crisis, scheduled to start May 27. "There is an urgent need for a sharp increase in financial flows to

Africa on highly concessional terms... (from) the World Bank, African Development Bank" and donors among the industrial countries, it said.

"Extensive debt restructuring, notably 'retroactive terms adjustment' (i.e., cancellation of repayment obligations) on government credits and easier terms on commercial bank loans could be an important part of financial packages," the institute said.

In a report last month, World Bank President A.W. Clausen said 29 low-income countries of Africa are poorer today than in 1960. He predicted a shortfall of \$2.5 billion a year in the amount needed to provide prospects of renewed growth.

The institute reported growing recognition among the countries of past policy failures and increasing political will for reforms such as making realistic exchange rates, ending neglect of agriculture, cutting back the economic role of government and emphasising rehabilitation and improvement of existing projects

rather than new projects. Donor governments and international lending institutions also have been at fault, said the report, titled "African Debt and Financing."

"All too often (they) pressed African governments to accept inadequately planned and prepared projects that have at times amounted to white elephants," it said.

The study contrasted the success of recent International Monetary Fund (IMF) programmes in India and Turkey and their failure in most of Africa and Latin America.

"Is it really a coincidence that in both India and Turkey the borrowing governments endorsed the (IMF) conditions as their own, while in Africa they have been typically regarded as alien impositions?" it asked.

It suggested that in Africa such international organisations need to make greater efforts at "policy dialogue, attempting to establish a meeting of minds with the national government."

Geologists estimate Saudi phosphate deposits to be biggest in Middle East

JEDDAH (Agencies) — Phosphate deposits at Jalamid in northern Saudi Arabia may be the biggest in the Middle East, according to government geological consultants.

After a year of drilling and sampling, reserves at Jalamid have been estimated at 310 million tonnes of ore containing an average 23 per cent phosphorus pentoxide, they told reporters.

The ore body, 11 kilometres long and two kilometres wide, has an average thickness of five metres. At one point it is 13.5 metres thick and only five metres from the surface, making it easy to mine.

Transporting the ore to the Red Sea or Gulf coasts, several hundred kilometres away, could pose a problem, however, the geologists said.

Feasibility studies would have to be conducted on exploiting the deposits, and it could be seven to 10 years before they are mined, they added.

One said the deposit, 150 kilometres south of the huge Akashat deposits in Iraq, could easily be the biggest in the Middle East, although more drilling was needed to confirm this.

The region is the world's main phosphate-producing area, with deposits stretching from Morocco to Jordan and Iran.

Phosphates were first found in the Turaif region of northern Saudi Arabia, which includes Jalamid, some 20 years ago.

New plants will more than double Arab cement output. Meanwhile, Gulf Arab cement output in the first half of this year will increase more than two and a

half times to 36.08 million tons, from 14.48 million tons in 1985, following completion of 23 plants now under construction or being expanded.

According to figures from the Gulf Organisation for Industrial Consulting (GOIC), the plants will initially produce 21.60 million tons out of an installed capacity of 24.57 million tons.

Iraq will account for 60 per cent of the additional output, with eight factories producing 14.70 million tons.

Saudi Arabia, which has seven new plants due to be completed by mid-1986, will increase its cement output by 4.95 million tons.

With five new plants, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) will contribute an additional 3.29 million tons or 13.4 per cent to total Arab cement production.

S. Arabia pressures EC, retains ban on produce

BAHRAIN (R) — Saudi Arabia is maintaining a ban on fresh meat and produce from Europe for fear of radiation contamination, European diplomatic sources in Riyadh said Wednesday.

The ban went into force on May 7 following an unpublished decree the previous day on fears of contamination in the wake of the Soviet Chernobyl nuclear disaster.

But trade sources in the Gulf said it seemed the Saudis were also using this as an excuse "to slap the Europeans over the wrist" in a dispute over European Community (EC) tariffs.

Diplomatic sources in Saudi Arabia had earlier said the ban, covering fresh and chilled meat, fruit and vegetables, yoghurt, cheese and flowers and plants, was expected to last for one full week from May 7.

Diplomats contacted in the kingdom Wednesday, however, said the ban was under review by a Saudi committee and no action was expected at least until next Sunday.

"We hold out no hope to our exporters for any change in the order until May 18 at the earliest, and the ban could continue for

some time afterwards," one EC diplomat said.

Trade sources in the Gulf suggested the Saudis could maintain at least a selective ban for some time to pressure the EC over its tariffs on imports of petrochemical products from the kingdom — a major bone of contention between the two sides.

The Saudis could be finding radiation a very, very convenient excuse," one source commented.

Diplomats in Riyadh said EC representatives had approached the Saudi commerce ministry for clarification on the categories of goods included in the ban.

The picture for exporters is quite confusing at the moment," one said.

The diplomats said Saudi port officials were taking a very broad view of the ban and including goods which did not appear to be covered in the decree. A number of containers had already been reexported, they said.

Trade sources said the British

agriculture ministry had said it would issue certificates to British exporters stating that goods were free from radioactive contamination before they were shipped.

Importers in Saudi Arabia were also issuing certificates undertaking to reexport any cargo found to contain radiation levels in excess of allowed limits, the sources added.

They said some containers were being unloaded for checks. The problem was the method of checking and the permitted radiation levels were not clear.

[Trade sources said it was still too early to know whether other countries — such as Australia, New Zealand and the United States — would be able to take advantage of the ban.

"It depends on how long it continues," one said.

Among other Gulf states, Qatar has banned temporarily imports of foodstuffs from some East European states, Kuwait is screening imports, particularly from Turkey which supplies some 80 per cent of fresh food needs, but no bans have been announced.

Kuwait sells W. German assets

FRANKFURT (R) — Kuwait sold its three per cent stake in Schering A.G. recently and was selling off all its German share holdings except those of Daimler-Benz A.G. and Deutsche Bank A.G., Schering's managing board member, Mr. Klaus Pohl, said.

He told a news conference Tuesday the Schering share price fell sharply on those sales about three weeks ago from above 600 marks. Schering shares closed at 530 marks Tuesday.

Kuwait's German share holdings include a 14 per cent stake in luxury car-maker Daimler, which also has strong links into the high-tech sector, and a 24.9 per cent stake in chemical Hoechst. Kuwait's stake in Deutsche Bank is not known, but individual shareholdings in Germany's biggest bank are limited to a maximum five per cent.

Only this week, Kuwaiti Finance Minister Jassim Mohammad Al Khorafi told the national assembly that the country was reviewing the spread of its foreign assets and may shift funds to communist states and Third World countries.

Share analysts said Kuwait appeared to be selling off some of its West German share holdings in recent weeks, but they added sales were not as dramatic as Mr. Pohl's comments suggested.

Some analysts said Kuwait's stake in some West German companies was too high for them to be sold off quietly.

But others said that Kuwait was moving very cautiously, selling through intermediaries and other centres.

Analysts agreed that a sale of Kuwait's stake in Hoechst A.G. would have depressed the price far

more, with recent declines much in line with the sector's general losses.

Hoechst closed at 280 marks Tuesday from just above 300 marks three weeks ago. Daimler finished at 1,300 marks compared with over 1,500 in the fourth week of April and Deutsche ended at 798 marks after peaking above 900 in mid-April.

The analysts here noted that the sharp reduction in national income due to the dramatic collapse of oil prices had forced Kuwait to reconsider its investment policies.

But most analysts agreed that the technical declines on West German stock exchanges recently could not be attributed to a large scale sell-off by Kuwait.

"They seem to be readjusting their investments, but so are other foreign investor groups," one analyst with major West German bank told Reuters.

Pentagon moves to block contract to Italian firm with Libyan ties

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Defence Department has moved to block the award of a contract for combat bulldozers to the Fiat-Allis Co. because it is partially owned by Libya. Pentagon sources said Tuesday.

The sources, who agreed to discuss the matter only if not identified, said Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger had intervened in the case following testimony on Capitol Hill by Mr. Fred Ikle, the under secretary of defence for policy.

The House of Representatives on Tuesday approved a resolution asking Mr. Weinberger to delay awarding the contract to Fiat-Allis until after the Pentagon budget

bill is passed.

The resolution said U.S. anti-terrorist efforts against Libya "would be undercut by the inadvertent transfer of United States tax dollars to the government of Libya."

Mr. Ikle informed a Senate armed services subcommittee on May 1 that the Defence Department did not appear to have the authority to reject a valid low bid from Fiat-Allis even though it is a subsidiary of Italy's Fiat SPA, which is 15 per cent owned by Libya.

"The (Pentagon) attorneys are busily searching for ways to avoid awarding that contract," one official said Monday. "And I can as-

sure you they will find a way. It's being held up now because they found a technical reason to do so. Weinberger is taking a real hard line on this issue of Libyan ownership. And Fiat now has a big problem."

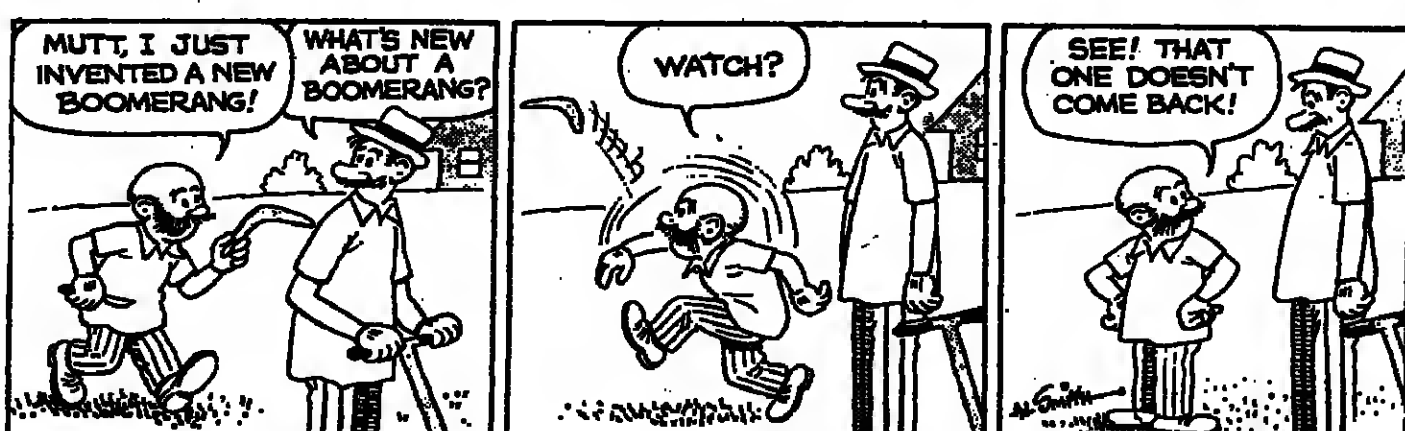
According to Mr. Ikle, the Pentagon has awarded contracts totaling \$23.6 million to Fiat or its subsidiaries since 1984. The government-owned Libyan Foreign Investment Co. has held a 15 per cent interest in Fiat SPA since 1977 and has two seats on the company's board of directors.

Mr. Robert Sims, the Pentagon's chief spokesman, confirmed the sources' statements in part on Tuesday.

Peanuts



Mutt 'n' Jeff



Andy Capp



THE BETTER HALF. By Harris



JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

TYRID

MYTEP

LIMFAY

NOTINE

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer: A

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumble: FABLE CHECK OPAQUE VANTY

Answer: Apparently, a guy who eats and drinks too much would rather be a good liver than this—HAVE ONE

Handwritten signature or note at the bottom of the page.

Strategic study reviews conflicts in Asia, Mideast

LONDON (AP) — The Soviet-backed government in Afghanistan has made "considerable headway" in fighting the resistance and gaining the support of citizens, the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) said Wednesday.

Reporting on the war during 1985 and until early this spring, the IISS said, "the recent consensus suggests that, while the Mujaheddin still control many mountainous areas of the country, the government is exerting greater authority in the most easily defended low ground."

"Although the guerrillas can still ambush convoys and stage hit-and-run raids, their attacks can no longer cripple the economy," it added.

Politically, the IISS said, "even if the resistance were some day offered a real chance to win power, there is no doubt that the factions would fight one another bitterly over it."

On Tuesday, Afghan army forces bombarded a Pakistani border town with artillery, killing and injuring dozens of people and demolishing shops and homes and an Afghan refugee camp, Pakistani officials said.

The Pakistani foreign ministry said in a statement that the artillery hit the small town of Terri Mengal and at least 14 people had been killed and more than 20 injured. But officials in the Pakistani border city of Peshawar said more than 30 people had been injured.

Afghan army artillery opened fire in mid-morning and fired dozens of high explosive shells at the border settlement, said the officials, speaking on condition they not be identified.

Many of the shells landed in an Afghan refugee camp on the outskirts of the town, and 13 of the

refugees were killed, the officials said. The high-explosive shells tore apart the refugees' tents and cut down people as they tried to flee, they said.

The foreign ministry statement, which provided few details, confirmed that 13 of the dead were Afghan refugees. One Pakistani was also killed, it said.

The Afghan charge d'affaires was summoned to the foreign ministry in Islamabad late Tuesday and given a strong protest warning his government to halt such unprovoked attacks or face the consequences, the ministry said.

News of Tuesday's attack came after the foreign ministry announced earlier in the day that Afghan air force jets had attacked Pakistani territory for three days in a row. One person had been killed in the air raids and three soldiers and two civilians wounded, the ministry said in an earlier statement.

Pakistan has alleged that more than 20 people have been killed in Afghan air attacks in the past two weeks, including two major air raids which claimed nine lives each.

Terri Mengal is a major crossing point for Afghan refugees fleeing the war in their country and the area is also used by Afghan Muslim guerrillas fighting Afghanistan's communist government. The guerrillas often use the area to cross the border.

Commenting on Pakistan and India, IISS said that "while the present governments are in little

danger of falling, they both face considerable economic and social problems."

The IISS annual report welcomed the establishment of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, saying it "might, over time and in small steps, build new confidence by solving non-controversial, non-political problems."

There are no indications that the Iran-Iraq war, more than six years old, will be over soon, the IISS said, and the conflict is in a stalemate on the ground.

"Iran is not prepared to negotiate but cannot dictate its own peace; Iraq is more than willing to make peace but cannot accept Iran's terms. Both parties seem to be prepared for a long drawn-out conflict," the report said.

Summing up developments in the Middle East, the IISS noted that 1985 had appeared to be the year in which real progress would be made in settling the Arab-Israeli dispute, but this did not happen.

The reason for failure, IISS said, was "not a reflection of a lack of desire on the part of the peace makers but of their fundamental weakness in the face of those who oppose peace."

"What 1985 revealed was a shift in the balance of power in the Middle East that had begun with the Iranian revolution, had been reinforced by the assassination of (Egypt's President Anwar) Sadat, and was capped by the Syrian victory in Lebanon," the report added.

Until the imbalance between moderate forces desiring peace and forces opposed to it is redressed, obstacles to peace-making will remain, the assessment concluded.

Engine of Delta rocket recovered

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida (AP) — Divers working in strong currents and murky waters have recovered an engine and electrical relay box that could show why a Delta rocket failed, the head of the investigation team reported Tuesday.

"We're gratified to have our hands on this hardware," Mr. Lawrence J. Ross told reporters in announcing that the critical components had been retrieved by divers from the U.S. navy salvage ship Opportune.

He said last week that an electrical short circuit was the probable cause of the early shutdown of the Delta first stage engine 71 seconds after the rocket lifted off May 3.

Without the engine thrust, the rocket spun out of control and was destroyed by a radio signal from the ground that ignited explosive packages in the vehicle. A \$57.5 million weather satellite was destroyed.

Mr. Ross said the short circuit most likely occurred in the engine's electrical wiring or in the relay box. He said the recovered material could help pinpoint the cause of the failure, which ended a string of 43 straight successful Delta launches.

Searches by NASA ship Freedom Star and a four-man submarine, the Sea-Link 1, last week located the AFT section of the rocket with the first stage engine 50 meters beneath the surface of the Atlantic about 48 kilometers offshore. High winds prevented the Opportune divers from attempting the recovery until Tuesday.

Pretoria, Commonwealth mediators open talks

CAPE TOWN (R) — The South African government, facing relentless black unrest and a threat of economic sanctions, has opened talks with Commonwealth mediators trying to arrange a truce between Pretoria and its guerrilla opponents.

Six of the seven dignitaries from the Commonwealth, which groups Britain and its former colonies, spent three hours with foreign Minister P. W. Botha Tuesday.

Informal sources said the mediators, led by former Australian prime minister, Mr. Malcolm Fraser and former Nigerian leader, Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo, were also likely to meet South African President P. W. Botha and Mr. Nelson Mandela, jailed leader of the banned African National Congress (ANC).

Diplomats said it appeared the team was urging Pretoria to recognize the ANC, the main guerrilla group fighting white rule, and to free Mr. Mandela in return for an ANC agreement to call a ceasefire and negotiate.

The latest visit by the mediators was seen by some diplomats as crucial if Commonwealth states were to be dissuaded from imposing punitive sanctions on Pretoria.

"They can't keep shutting back and forth," one diplomat told Reuters. "If this fails, then they will obviously recommend sanctions."

Half of South Africa's trade is with the 49 Commonwealth states and a cabinet minister, who asked not to be named, described the sanctions threat as a "severe challenge."

The team is due to report next month to the Commonwealth states, which agreed to set up the

group as a compromise move after Britain opposed the imposition of sanctions at a conference last October.

The diplomat said: "If they succeed it gets Britain off the hook."

Diplomats say the mediators face a formidable task in seeking to reconcile Pretoria's refusal to concede black majority rule with ANC demands for "one person, one vote."

Despite recent reforms of the apartheid system, black people must still live apart from whites and send their children to separate schools. They have no vote in parliament.

Mounting black radicalism has led to over 1,500 deaths in 27 months of unrest, mainly in clashes between security forces and township residents but increasingly in battles between radicals and those they see as "selling out" to the government.

Tuesday, police said three men had been found burnt to death — a common method of killing in the black-against-black violence — and reported 55 arrests on charges linked to political unrest.

Earlier, Tuesday, the government introduced a bill to give black citizens full property ownership rights within their segregated neighbourhoods.

Mr. Botha had promised the legislation, presented to parliament in Cape Town, more than a year ago.

Many blacks currently are restricted to 99-year leases of property in the urban residential areas set aside for them. The bill would allow such leases to be converted to outright ownership upon payment of a transfer fee to the leaseholder.

Army plans full-scale attack on Tamil rebels

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) — The army plans a full-scale offensive against Tamil separatist rebels in the north if terrorists launch another attack in the capital, a senior government official said Tuesday.

"We are expecting the next attacks at any time now. The army will go into operation immediately afterward," said the official, speaking on condition he not be identified further.

"After the next attack on Colombo, you will see the army launch a full-scale operation in northern Jaffna. Buildup there is under way," said the official, who is close to foreign policy and national security circles.

The official said he was warning his staff to avoid bus and railway terminals where terrorists could strike.

"The terrorists struck Colombo with great skill but if they strike again in the south, we will give them a devastating blow in the north," he said. "Armed forces are itching to fight but the president has restrained them."

COLUMNS 7&8

11-year-old boy hidden 7 years from gang

CASIGLIONECELLO, Italy (R) — An Italian boy was kept in hiding for seven years to protect him from a gang vendetta in which 36 members of his family were killed, a social worker told a child abuse conference. The social worker, in an address to the conference in this Tuscan coastal town at last weekend, said the child, now aged 11, and his 16-year-old brother were the sole male survivors of the family on the losing side in a vendetta between rival members of the Calabrian mafia in southern Italy. The social worker remained anonymous for fear that revealing his identity would help gang killers locate the two boys whose names were also kept secret. He said the vendetta began when the 11-year-old whom he called "Domenico," was still in his mother's womb. His father was shot dead on his doorstep by two men with sawn-off shotguns. According to an account of the social worker's address in Monday's Rome newspaper *Il Messaggero*, the rival gang had since killed 35 more people including three of Domenico's four brothers, cousins and other relatives.

'Tehran strangler' admits to 40 murders

TEHRAN (R) — Majid Salek Mahmoudi, the "Tehran Strangler" and Iran's most notorious murderer, has confessed to killing at least 40 women and children over the past five years, Ettelaat newspaper reported. Mahmoudi was due to face trial this month for 30 murders uncovered in questioning, but an investigator quoted by the newspaper said he has now admitted 10 more. "In one interrogation session he said he started these crimes in 1980, sometimes committing four murders a week," the investigator said. Mahmoudi, 33, was stopped two months ago in his green Chevrolet. Police, searching the car, found the ration coupons of one of his victims and the white cord with which most of them were strangled. Ettelaat said the police now have a file on him two metres thick. The investigator described Mahmoudi as "fairly intelligent" and Ahbar newspaper, which interviewed him in March, said he was meticulously clean and neither smoked nor drank.

Dead donkey causes water crisis

KARACHI (R) — Water was turned off for a third of Karachi's two million people Wednesday so that a dead donkey could be removed from a conduit, officials said. Retrieval of the animal had been delayed for three days after engineers were detained and punished by troops for entering a curfew area without passes, officials of the water and sewerage board said. The troops sent them back and the population continued to consume water distributed through the conduit. It was cleared Wednesday after city authorities asked troops to allow the engineers to do their job.

Michael Jackson to star in Pepsi ad

NEW YORK (R) — Reclusive mega-star Michael Jackson made a rare news conference appearance to have others say he will be paid several million dollars for three brief Pepsi-Cola television commercials. Jackson spoke a total of 14 words in hanks before bolting for the door of a Manhattan nightclub and the safety of a limousine with black-tinted glass. As he ran off, reporters shouted, "Why don't you answer questions?" Pepsi-Cola President Roger Enrico, however, was not at a loss for words. He said Pepsi will pay Jackson between \$5 million and \$15 million to make three television commercials for the company, including one in Spanish, that will be shown in most of the 148 countries in which the softdrink is sold. Enrico declared, "Pepsi Cola and Michael Jackson have joined forces in the most far-reaching accord ever reached between a company and a performer... we will entertain the public like never before. Michael Jackson will do what he was always wanted to do — make the whole world smile."

China-Taiwan talks over plane could begin Monday

TAIPEI (R) — The first talks between China and Taiwan since 1949 — on the return of a Jumbo jet and its crew diverted to the mainland — might begin on Monday, Taiwan's China Airlines said Wednesday.

The airline said in a statement it was negotiating with China's national carrier CAAC on a timetable for the talks, which will take place in Hong Kong.

China Airlines proposed on Tuesday that the talks be held on Friday but in a reply, relayed on Wednesday through Hong Kong's

U.S. to assist Aquino in cleaning 'real mess'

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of State, Mr. George Shultz, in a shift of emphasis from two weeks ago, said Tuesday the United States will help lead an international effort to collect \$2 billion to assist President Corazon Aquino in coping with "a real mess" in the Philippines.

In another development, the visiting Roman Catholic archbishop of Manila, Cardinal Jaime Sin, said in Washington that former president Ferdinand Marcos has virtually no support left in the Philippines and that at least some of the people demonstrating on his behalf are paid by Marcos' cronies.

The cardinal also told reporters that, with outside support and domestic self-help Mrs. Aquino should have the economy "flourishing in three years."

Mr. Shultz, appearing on the NBC-TV network's "Today" programme, said that although the administration is asking Congress to increase American aid by \$150 million this year, they need more, there is no doubt about it.

He said the United States will try to help raise the \$2 billion that Mrs. Aquino has said is needed to repair the economic devastation left by ousted leader Ferdinand Marcos.

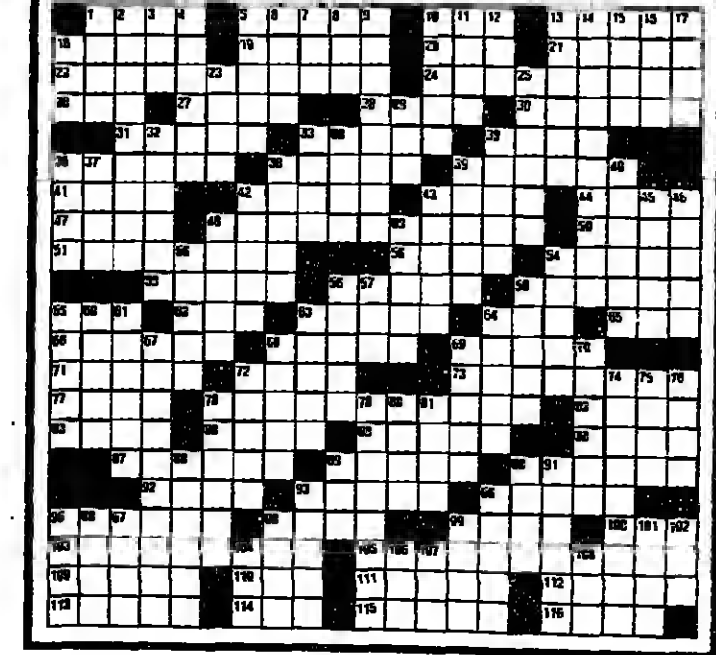
Mr. Shultz's emphasis on the need for more aid marked a change from two weeks ago, when he and President Ronald Reagan met with Philippine Vice President Salvador Laurel in Bali. Obviously annoyed, Mr. Shultz told reporters, "Vice President Laurel,

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

Edited by Herb Ettenson

RELAX
By Peter Swift

ACROSS
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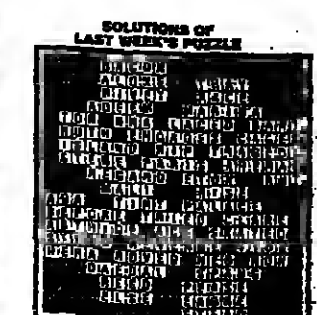
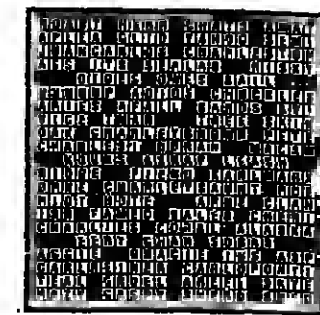


Last Week's Cryptograms

1. Big ships may leave their dockyards, and planes may vacate airports, but parking lots stayed filled up forever.
2. The hippopotamus' plaintive song told poor Will to avoid his
3. Housekeeper wapt as she swept up broken bric-a-brac in kitchen.
4. Old Vikings sailed on seven seas, seeking the eighth.

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. GRENKX ON GIZGVXST OSWEOLMIWYA YBA
CREX KFTT, LOM BEXKXA EBJZSF IXST BEX
YZVXYA MR BJX CREX NOS. —By Alvin R. Lebar
2. CMRAWMEWLT AOKLPWKAWEKBLT
KP MLEOSEPH PROBLEM CRAKUP EPT SEA
HUPL CKAAPUP. —By Ed Huddleson
3. WNUW AOVGVN I WAU'WN XRYL OPERA
LIST FRY FIST BX HIST GYST SVPHN
WIST. —By Norroa Rhoades
4. JFFI LPN SID YSH JSYGZJG ZA PZIFP YSD
NZTG ABE NSTLEA. —By Earl Ireland



GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN
AND OMAR SHARIF
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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ 10 ♣ 1000 ♢ 876
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 NT Pass
2 NT Pass ?
What action do you take?
A.—Your first reaction might be that you have said all you are going to say. However, your hand is actually better than its HCP might suggest. You have an honor in partner's suit and good intermediates. We would venture on to game.

Q2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ AK74 ♣ 63 ♢ A105 ♣ KJ6
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♣ 2 ♣
2 ♣ Pass ?
What do you bid now?
A.—If you routinely bid four spades, you do not appreciate the full value of your hand. The fact that partner has made a free bid means that he is likely to be better than minimum, and your hand is certainly defeatable. Start with a bid of three clubs. When partner learns that his suit is solidified, he might be able to cue-bid the enemy suit, which could propel you to a laydown slam.

Q3—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ 10763 ♣ 9852 ♢ A83 ♣ A5
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ 1 ♣ Pass Pass
Dble 2 ? ?
What action do you take?
A.—Your hand should develop at least three tricks defensively, possibly more. Partner quite probably will produce four tricks. That looks like a sure two-trick penalty to us, perhaps even a bonanza. Double.

Q4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ 652 ♣ 782 ♢ 853 ♣ J102
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ 1 ♣ Pass Pass
Dble 2 ? ?
What action do you take?
A.—Points, schmeints. This isn't the time to worry about whether you have 7 points or 9. What matters here is that you have three honor cards in partner's two suits, and he is looking for game. If he needs more than that on this auction, it's his bidding that needs scrutinizing, not yours.

Africans urged to adopt family planning schemes

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP) — Lawmakers from 37 African countries were urged Tuesday to adopt family planning and sex education programmes to curb the continent's population explosion, the world's highest.

Mr. Bradman Weerakoon, secretary general of the International Planned Parenthood Federation, told the five-day all-Africa parliamentary conference on population and development the baby boom presents a challenge which will continue to haunt African governments.

The non-governmental federation had spent \$150 million in the past 16 years to help African nations improve living standards and in that time the mortality rate had been reduced from 25 to 16 in each 1000, he said.

"But for responsible parenthood, child spacing and family planning to be generally accepted and made part of the people's everyday life a great deal more remains to be done," he told the 250 legislators on the second day of the conference.

Zimbabwe's deputy health minister, Mr. Edward Pswarayi, stressed the need for education programmes directed at African women to check the population

explosion.

"Programmes aimed at expanding women's social and economic opportunities are the most significant measures that can be taken to enhance children's health and the welfare of families," he said.

The junior minister said also that family planning was important to ensure child survival, and that African men should be more extensively educated about contraceptives.

"With improvements in child survival the concept of smaller families would be easier to embrace," he said. "A greater demand for family planning would be generated and we should not be found wanting."

The conference, which ends Friday, is being jointly organised by the Zimbabwe parliament and the U.S.-based Global Committee of Parliamentarians on Population and Development.

Demographers and other experts are alerting the African lawmakers to the dangers of Africa's population explosion, a major obstacle towards development on the continent. While the birth rate is three per cent a year, food output has risen only 1.9 per cent in the last decade.